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'19 Kids and Counting' Son Named in Underage Sex Probe

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By *In Touch Weekly*



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Josh Duggar of the TLC hit reality show *19 Kids and Counting* was named in a police report as the "alleged offender" in an underage sexual abuse probe, *In Touch* magazine is reporting exclusively.

The charge being pursued while Josh was a minor was sexual assault in the fourth degree, multiple sources who have seen the police report and are familiar with the case told *In Touch*. According to the report, Josh was brought into the Arkansas State Police by his father, **Jim Bob**, who said he caught him leaving a young girl's bedroom and "learned something inappropriate happened." one source said

The charge being pursued while Josh was a minor was sexual assault in the fourth degree, multiple sources who have seen the police report and are familiar with the case told *In Touch*. According to the report, Josh was brought into the Arkansas State Police by his father, **Jim Bob**, who said he caught him leaving a young girl's bedroom and "learned something inappropriate happened," one source said.



Josh and his wife, Anna. (Photo Credit: Getty Images)

A bizarre turn of events prevented police and prosecutors from finishing their investigation and possibly prosecuting. The state trooper who originally took the report about Josh shortly before 2005 never followed up. That state trooper was later convicted on child pornography charges and is serving a 56-year prison sentence.

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When the state trooper ran into trouble, someone from the Arkansas State Police alerted the Child Abuse Hotline about the Duggar situation that had been sitting inactive. That's when the Crimes Against Children Division and Springdale Police Department got involved. By then the three-year statute of limitations had passed and it would not have been possible to pursue prosecution of Josh if the allegations warranted, so the investigation was discontinued. "A technicality prevented any further action," a source familiar with the case told *In Touch*. "That's been the biggest regret in all of this." (The statute of limitations has since been lengthened.)

Sgt. Darrel Hignite — identified by multiple sources as the officer who led the investigation into the allegations about Josh — told *In Touch*: "I can't comment or discuss [this case] because of the sensitive nature and because it involved a juvenile."



The Duggar family. (Photo Credit: Getty Images)

Rumors about Josh have swirled for years, but *In Touch's* investigation has uncovered the secret he has been hiding. "I saw and read the report and it clearly stated that Jim Bob brought his son Josh into the Arkansas State Police and spoke to a state trooper about Josh's involvement in alleged inappropriate touching with a minor," one source told *In Touch*.

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The first report was filed shortly before 2005. Josh and his wife, Anna, have three children and live in Washington, D.C., where he is a lobbyist for the Family Research Council.

For all the latest inside Josh Duggar's shocking past, pick up the new issue of *In Touch Weekly*, on newsstands tomorrow!

JOSH DUGGAR NAMED IN

The dark secret that *19 Kids and Counting*'s
Josh Duggar's been hiding

UNDERAGE SEX PROBE

Josh Duggar had a confession to make. "As I became a teenage young man I was constantly tempted to have lots of wrong thoughts and often battled to keep my heart right," he admits on his website, hinting that the wholesome image often showcased on TLC's *19 Kids and Counting* isn't always accurate. "One of the greatest things that helped me in my struggles was my parents' commitment to accountability. I found I had a clear conscience only when I was willing to confess my thoughts and temptations quickly to God and my parents."

But just how bad were his sins?

An *In Touch* investigation has uncovered that shortly before 2005, the Duggars' oldest son, now 27, was named as the "alleged offender" in a police report accusing Josh (who was then slightly underage) of "inappropriate touching" of a female minor, according to multiple sources. The charge being pursued was sexual assault in the fourth degree. (*In Touch* is not naming the alleged victim of the sexual assault.) "I saw and read the report, and it clearly stated that [Duggar patriarch] Jim Bob brought

his son Josh into the Arkansas State Police and spoke to a state trooper about Josh's involvement in inappropriate touching with a minor," says a source, explaining that the report stated that Jim Bob caught his son leaving a young girl's "bedroom and learned that something inappropriate

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"The incident happened before the Duggars were household names"

—A SECOND INSIDER

ate occurred. It wasn't rape, but it wasn't good. Jim Bob was mortified and took Josh down to the station to have the authorities look into it."

Then, an unexpected (and unfortunate) twist: The trooper who Jim Bob, 49, and Josh spoke to at the station — later identified as Joseph Hutchens — did not follow protocol and never reported the case to the Child Abuse Hotline. Several sources, who have seen the police report, tell *In Touch* that Hutchens buried it

and didn't follow up. Says an insider, "Hutchens really dropped the ball."

It took years for the report to end up with the Springdale Police Department. The report likely would have stayed hidden if not for a bizarre twist. Hutchens was twice convicted on child pornography charges and is currently serving a 56-year sentence. It was only after he was investigated for one of his crimes that a member of the Troop L Arkansas State Police called the Child Abuse Hotline with the Duggar accusations. A report from that call was then sent to the Crimes Against Children Division, which then alerted the Springdale Police Department (the Duggars live in Tontitown, which is located in Springdale's jurisdiction). "I can't comment or discuss [this case] because of the sensitive nature and because it involved a juvenile," Sgt. Darrel Hignite — an officer who sources say worked on the case — told *In Touch* when asked if he had knowledge of the investigation. "Sorry, there's nothing I can say."

A police investigation was launched, but by then, Arkansas' three-year statute of limitations had run out. Springdale police liaised with the local prosecutor, who confirmed that no charges could be brought because of the statute of limitations expiring. It's unclear if the CACD continued to investigate. "Arkansas law prohibits any comment about confidential information regarding a minor," Ken Hunt of Washington County's CACD told *In Touch* when asked about the investigation against Josh. Whitney Taylor, who sources told *In Touch* worked at the CACD on the Duggar case, echoed Hunt. "I'm sorry," Taylor told *In Touch*. "I can't give you any

information." Police were frustrated that they had to stop their investigation due to the statute of limitations, says the source: "A technicality prevented any further action. That's been the biggest regret in all of this." (The statute has since been lengthened.)

Rumors about a sex crime have swirled over the years. In 2013, Josh, his wife, Anna, 26, and their kids, Mackynzie, 5, and Michael, 3 (they later welcomed Marcus, 11 months, and have another girl due in July), moved over 1,000 miles away to Washington, D.C. Josh accepted a high-profile lobbying job with conservative group Family Research Council, and he is a political affiliate of presidential hopeful Mike Huckabee, Senator Ted Cruz, Senator Rick Santorum, Indiana Governor Mike Pence and Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker. He also seems to have made peace with his dark past. "I often had failures in my early teenage years," Josh writes on his site. "[But] I learned quickly that great freedom can be achieved by accountability, and great accountability requires humility and openness." ■

**TOUGH DECISION**

Jim Bob brought Josh to the Arkansas State Police, where he spoke with former state trooper Joseph Hutchens (right), after suspecting that his son had sexually assaulted a minor. "Jim Bob did what he thought was right," says a source.

**GOOD VS. EVIL**

The Duggars seem like a close-knit family on camera, but according to a family source, "There's a lot of resentment behind the scenes."

CLOCKWISE FROM RIGHT: GETTY (2); R/A (2)